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SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

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TAGS: [PBTS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: NEW BARRIER ROUTE AROUND MA'ALE ADUMIM LEAVES WEST
BANK DIVIDED

REF: A. TEL AVIV 01875
[B.](#) 2007 JERUSALEM 02131
[C.](#) 2007 JERUSALEM 02124
[D.](#) 2007 JERUSALEM 01840
[E.](#) 2007 SECSTATE 129800

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1.](#) (C) Summary. Jerusalem attorney Shlomo Lecker told PolOff that a new barrier route around Ma'ale Adumim leaves 4,000 dunums (about 1,000 acres) of land outside the area enclosed by the barrier, but still effectively cuts the West Bank in two and separates Palestinians from Jerusalem. Abu Dis Mayor Jaffal told PolOff he is concerned about Palestinian access to the 4,000 dunums once the barrier is complete. Ma'ale Adumim settlement Mayor Kashriel said he will challenge the new route in court. End Summary.

JERUSALEM ATTORNEY SAYS BARRIER ROUTE
UNDERMINES VIABILITY OF PALESTINIAN STATE

[2.](#) (C) Jerusalem attorney Shlomo Lecker told PolOff August 26 that the GoI decided to reroute the separation barrier to the south and east of Ma'ale Adumim -- the West Bank settlement immediately east of Jerusalem -- to leave 4,000 dunums (1,000 acres) of land outside the area enclosed by the barrier. He said this decision came roughly eleven months after the deadline set by the Israeli High Court of Justice (HCJ) for GoI DefMin Barak to review the barrier's route and address its humanitarian impact. Lecker said the route change does not decrease the distance by which the barrier will cut into the West Bank.

[3.](#) (C) Lecker represents the Municipalities of Abu Dis and al-Sawahira in two separate but related petitions to the HCJ to reroute the barrier. He said the barrier incorporates 65,000 dunums of the West Bank into the Ma'ale Adumim "bubble" (the area around Ma'ale Adumim and surrounding settlements that is encompassed by the barrier), effectively dividing the northern and southern parts of the West Bank. This will undermine the viability of a future Palestinian state, according to Lecker.

[4.](#) (C) Lecker said the GoI plans to complete the barrier around the Ma'ale Adumim "bubble" and create a Palestinian-use road south of it, running from Abu Dis and connecting to Route 1 between Ma'ale Adumim and Jericho (see Refs B-D). (Note: Lecker's petitions helped lead to reconsideration of the barrier's route around Ma'ale Adumim. End note.)

ABU DIS MAYOR: CHANGE IN ROUTE NOT ENOUGH

[5.](#) (C) Ibrahim Jaffal, the Mayor of Abu Dis, told PolOff August 26 that he welcomes the route change, but that it

falls short of Palestinians' expectations. He said the GoI has not provided details about Palestinian access to the 4,000 dunums in question, and said he fears that they will be prevented from using the land. PolOff observed the area of the reroute on August 27, noting that it consists mostly of largely unused rocky hills.

MA'ALE ADUMIM MAYOR: I WILL FIGHT THIS CHANGE

¶6. (C) Benny Kashriel, the Mayor of Ma'ale Adumim, told PolOff August 26 that he intends to fight the GoI decision to reroute the barrier, but admitted that he is not optimistic about returning to the original route. He said the settlement of Qedar will remain inside the Ma'ale Adumim "bubble" but denied that there are plans to incorporate Qedar into the Ma'ale Adumim Municipality.

WALLES